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**Kentucky 2016 Wheat Forecast, 2015 Final Burley Estimate**

**Kentucky** farmers expect to harvest 30.3 million bushels of **winter wheat** during 2016 according to the Kentucky Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. The expected crop for 2016 would be down 6 percent from the previous year. Farmers seeded 550,000 acres last fall with 410,000 acres to be harvested for grain. Based on crop conditions as of May 1 and assuming a normal growing season, farmers expect a yield of 74.0 bushel per acre, up 1.0 bushel from 2015. Acres for other uses totaled 140,000 acres and will be used as cover crop for tobacco or cut as silage or hay.

Since March, Kentucky experienced above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation. A freeze occurred in early April, but producers are optimistic temperatures weren't cold enough, for long enough, to cause widespread damage. The last week in April broke a 3 week streak of below normal precipitation. Producers have been applying fungicides to prevent head scab. As of May 1, winter wheat was rated 1 percent very poor, 2 percent poor, 9 percent fair, 60 percent good and 28 percent excellent. At this same date, 53 percent of wheat crop had headed, compared to 22 percent last year and 35 percent for the five year average.

Winter wheat production for the **Nation** was forecast at 1.43 billion bushels, up 4 percent from 2015. The expected area to be harvested for grain or seed totals 29.8 million acres, down 8 percent from last year. As of May 1, the U.S. yield was forecast at 47.8 bushels per acre, up 5.3 bushels from last year.

The final production estimate of **Kentucky burley tobacco** for 2015 was 104 million pounds, down 36 percent from the 163 million pounds produced in 2014. Average yield was 1,800 pounds per acre, down 350 pounds from the 2014 crop. Acreage harvested was 58,000 acres, down 24 percent from 2014. Average price per pound was estimated at \$1.92 per pound, down 2 cents from the previous year.

Burley production for the **burley producing States** totaled 145 million pounds, down 32 percent from 2014. Six states make up the burley producing states. Kentucky, the leading producer of burley tobacco, produced 72 percent of all burley grown in the United States.

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Director